

Public Works Committee
meeting of Tuesday, September 6, 2005
1st floor meeting room, Town Hall, 7:00pm

present: Vince O'Connor, Walter Wolnik, Guilford Mooring, Steven Puffer, Rob Crowner

1. The meeting convenes at 8:10pm due to Guilford's attendance at a concurrent meeting of the Select Board.

2. Streets and Sidewalks

Guilford presents the DPW's preliminary five-year street and sidewalk repaving plans, as well as a street list entitled "Estimated cost of reclaiming and 3" overlay of Amherst streets and sidewalks with OCI<70 (including streets with holds)". The repaving plans show the segments proposed for work in FY07 through FY11, based on anticipated Chapter 90 funds and disrepair ratings. Sidewalks can be covered with Chapter 90 if the adjacent street is being repaired.

Vince states that three streets not currently listed in the five-year plan should be prioritized: (a) the north segment of Stony Hill Road (beginning at Gatehouse Road), (b) Henry Street, and (c) Shutesbury Road. He does not believe that "dead end" side streets should be included in the plan before "connector" streets that get a lot of traffic.

Guilford points out that the plan does not list streets "on hold" for drainage work. Vince states that they should be listed and prioritized to year 1. Guilford explains that they were not included because the cost of the drainage work has not been calculated. He also mentions that there may be an increase in money for roads coming from the state. Vince observes that given the price of oil, it is likely that all estimates will rise in future years anyway.

Vince moves to request the DPW prepare a two-year drainage work estimate, remove the holds from those streets, and incorporate them into the overall paving plan in subsequent years in accordance with their levels of deterioration. He recommends against voting on the street plan until streets of lower priority are removed or displaced. Guilford notes that there are seven or eight streets on the drainage list. Rob observes that Vince's motion would not be binding on the DPW, and Guilford states that a revised plan may not be meaningful enough to make a difference in the committee's eventual recommendation. Nevertheless, the committee approves the motion by a vote of 3-0.

Vince suggests that one or more members of the committee should perform a site visit on each street on the list before the committee votes on the plan. He thinks that some streets on the list may have been paved recently enough that they

do not need to be redone now. He expects that some streets could be moved up the list while others are moved down. Rob points out that cost factors cause some streets to be listed where they are, because the total cost for each year needs to work out to about \$400,000. Some streets in very bad shape might not be listed because they simply cost too much and cannot be fitted into the puzzle.

Guilford explains that in translating costs from the OCI<70 list (where all costs are estimated at "worst-case" scenario levels) to the five-year plan (where some streets are proposed for less repair than "worst-case"), the standard procedure should be to assume the "worst-case" (i.e., highest cost) because it is beyond the scope of the program and/or the expertise of the committee to anticipate where costs might be lowered by a less-intense repair job.

Guilford states that drainage work could end with a shim coat that would be left to settle over the winter, extending the cost of repair of those roads over two years.

The committee reviews the OCI<70 list and discusses the relative condition of various streets.

3. "Old Business"

Vince requests that the item "Old Business" be a standard part of the agenda for each meeting of the committee, so that decisions and actions do not get forgotten. The committee's current "old business" includes right-turn-on-red proposals, new sidewalk discussions, and crosswalk painting proposals.

Vince suggests that "New Business" and "Announcements" should also be standard agenda items.

4. Sidewalks

Vince suggests that certain roads such as Stony Hill Road might be narrowed to accommodate sidewalks. Guilford states that it might be considered that people walking in the street contributes to a sense of neighborhood, but Vince points out that small children need sidewalks for safety.

5. Discussion

The committee informally discusses the status of some undeveloped parcels in North Amherst.

The meeting adjourns at 9:15pm.